

ADULT EDUCATION PRELIMINARY ACTION PLAN

ACTION
Agenda Item D-2
July 17, 2000

Recommendation:

- That the Council accept the proposed Preliminary Action Plan (Attachment A) as a framework for planning and allocating funds for fiscal year 2000-01.
- That, consistent with the Preliminary Action Plan, the Council authorize up to \$1 million in expenditures from the \$7 million fiscal year 2000-01 legislative appropriation to the Adult Education and Literacy Trust Fund to plan, develop, and implement a statewide public communication campaign.
- That the Council approve what remains in the 1999-2000 Adult Education and Literacy Initiative Fund and add up to \$450,000 from the Adult Education and Literacy Trust Fund as necessary to continue model demonstration projects and to help with start-up costs for the Family Literacy Institute during this fiscal year.

Rationale:

- Senate Bill 1 of the 2000 General Assembly directs the Council to establish a statewide mission for adult education and to develop a 20-year strategy in partnership with the Department for Adult Education and Literacy. The Preliminary Action Plan is the proposed framework for the 20-year strategic agenda.
- The Council staff convened a planning group in June 2000 to develop a preliminary action plan for adult education services. The group represented employers, adult education providers, state government, postsecondary education, and various education-related agencies across the Commonwealth. The proposed preliminary action plan reflects the recommendations of the group.
- By November 2000 the staff will develop for Council consideration more detailed guidelines using the Adult Education and Literacy Trust Fund for tuition discounts and employer tax credits, technical assistance, and community needs assessment and capacity building as required by the Adult Education Act.
- Senate Bill 1 directs the Council to develop a statewide public communication campaign to reach adults and employers with information about education and training. The Task Force on Adult Education endorsed the need to raise the awareness of adult education services because few adults take advantage of lifelong learning services. Work on this campaign should begin immediately.

- Three demonstration projects are recommended for continuation to serve as models for other areas of the state and expand existing services. Residual initiative funds (Department for Adult Education and Literacy Initiative Fund carry forward) will provide the majority of funds. The staff recommends that the Council use up to \$450,000 from the Adult Education and Literacy Trust Fund to continue the projects. The approval to fund demonstration projects is contingent upon the availability of carry forward Adult Education Initiative Funds from fiscal year 1999-2000.
- The creation of the Family Literacy Institute was recommended by an inter-agency task team representing the Department for Adult Education and Literacy, the Cabinet for Families and Children, the Office of Early Childhood, and the Kentucky Department of Education. The Family Literacy Institute will be located with the National Center for Family Literacy in Louisville to provide professional development services and coordination of family literacy efforts. The Institute is to be self-sustaining in two years. Participating agencies, including the Council on Postsecondary Education, are providing funds for start-up costs.

Background:

The Kentucky Adult Literacy Survey reports 1 million Kentuckians, age 16 to 65, function at low levels of literacy. State and federal funds administered by the Department for Adult Education and Literacy serve approximately 40,000 to 50,000 people each year, about 5 percent of the target population. Senate Bill 1 calls for a multi-faceted strategy to improve significantly the knowledge and skills of Kentucky's citizens and to improve the health and well-being of Kentucky's families and communities.

Federal and state funds appropriated to the Department for Adult Education and Literacy have been allocated for fiscal year 2000-01. The Department administers these funds to support adult education services in every county. Contracts for service began July 1, 2000.

A General Fund appropriation of \$7 million in fiscal year 2000-01 and \$12 million in fiscal year 2001-02 was made to the Council's Adult Education and Literacy Trust Fund to finance the various mandates, initiatives, and activities as set forth in Senate Bill 1. Trust Fund allocations should be based on two criteria: a) all investments must be scalable; that is, they must be capable of being expanded to help Kentucky greatly increase the number of persons served in adult education programs; and b) all investments must help to build community capacity.

Attachment A

Adult Education Preliminary Action Plan Proposed

This proposed Preliminary Action Plan will guide initial planning, leading to the 20-year strategic agenda to improve and expand adult education in Kentucky. The Council's acceptance of the plan will start the longer-term planning process, allowing for the timely development of guidelines to be submitted to the Council at the September 2000 meeting. The Council and the Department for Adult Education and Literacy will work together to draft the statewide strategic plan.

As levels of literacy rise, the Commonwealth will:

- Increase enrollment in postsecondary education.
- Raise per capita income.
- Reduce the number of children living in poverty.
- Improve the health and well being of Kentuckians.
- Increase civic participation.

The Adult Education and Literacy Trust Fund for fiscal year 2000-01 of \$7 million will support these objectives:

1. Public Communication Plan

Create a targeted communication campaign using multiple contexts (workplace, family, churches, hospitals, community, schools, media) and multiple messages to recruit adult learners, educate and mobilize community opinion leaders, and educate employers about the benefits of training workers. The public communications campaign will allow the Council to assess and develop strategies to break down barriers to participation. This project will be combined with the "postsecondary education communications plan" funded provisionally in the second year of the biennium in the Technology Trust Fund. The budget is up to \$1 million.

2. New Opportunity Grants

Develop guidelines for the use, distribution, and administration of grants to stimulate model adult education programs that may be replicated and for other initiatives of statewide significance, in cooperation with the Department for Adult Education and Literacy.

3. Economic Development and Workforce Training Matching Program

Engage in partnerships with entities such as Bluegrass State Skills Corporation, Kentucky Community and Technical College System, and other workplace initiatives and economic development investments to provide skills assessments, education, and training. Guidelines will be developed for the use, distribution, and administration of this feature of the plan.

4. Local Needs Assessment and Community Development

Encourage each community to conduct a thorough needs assessment, develop a local plan, and set goals to improve adult literacy. Guidelines will be developed to provide technical support for local planning and for incentives to stimulate local participation.

5. Professional Development

Develop standards for the preparation and professional development for adult educators.
Create a statewide professional development plan.

6. Statewide Information Technology and Distance Learning

Develop a coordinated, integrated, and searchable database for a centralized resource for instructional materials.

Provide adult-friendly multi-media curricula available on the Internet in cooperation with the Kentucky Commonwealth Virtual University and Kentucky Educational Television.

Create an “Incentive to Learn” model to provide affordable computers and Internet access to adult learners who make progress toward or achieve learning goals.

7. Tuition Discounts and Employer Tax Credits

Develop and disseminate the operational procedures for application and use of tuition discounts and tax credits, in cooperation with the Department for Adult Education and Literacy.

8. Statewide Competency-Based Certification for Workplace Skills

Plan and provide assessment tools and a common language for workplace skills with the Cabinet for Workforce Development, the Kentucky Department of Education, and the Kentucky Community and Technical College System.

9. Data Collection and Performance Measures

Working with the Department for Adult Education and Literacy, establish performance standards for adult literacy, including enrollment objectives for the period 2000-04 and several long-range objectives to 2020. Monitor progress in achieving the state’s goals.

Staff Preparation by Cheryl King